



FEMINIST MAJORITY

Political Action Committee

The following comparison points were pulled directly from the both the 2008 Democratic and Republican platforms as well as the voting records, policy positions, and public statements of the candidates.

2008 DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM <i>with Records, Policies of Obama/Biden</i>	2008 REPUBLICAN PLATFORM <i>with Records, Policies of McCain/Palin</i>
<p>ECONOMIC ISSUES</p> <p>SOCIAL SECURITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Platform opposes privatization.<input type="checkbox"/> Platform and Obama opposes raising retirement age. Obama would raise taxes of those paid more that \$250,000 a year to keep Social Security strong. <p>WORKERS RIGHTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Platform supports strengthening “ability of workers to organize unions.” Obama supports Employees Free Choice Act that helps unions to form.<input type="checkbox"/> Supports <u>paid Family and Medical Leave</u> and expanding Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) coverage. Currently, unpaid FMLA covers only 47% of private sector workers.<input type="checkbox"/> Platform and Obama supports 7 days <u>paid sick leave</u> for workers (half of all women workers have no paid sick leave).<input type="checkbox"/> Platform supports <u>Equal Pay for Equal Work</u> legislation and	<p>ECONOMIC ISSUES</p> <p>SOCIAL SECURITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Platform supports privatization.<input type="checkbox"/> McCain says funding of Social Security is a “disgrace” taking taxes paid by young workers to pay present-day retirees. “It’s an absolute disgrace, and it’s got to be fixed.” Will consider cost of living cuts and raising retirement age to fix it. <p>WORKERS RIGHTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Platform supports right of states to enact Right-to-Work laws that eliminate unions. McCain opposes Employees Free Choice Act and voted against it in 2007. Supports state Right to Work laws.<input type="checkbox"/> Platform silent on issue. McCain voted to gut Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in 2003 before he voted for it. Opposed to expanding FMLA, called it “a big government solution” and says it should be subject to negotiations between employers and workers.<input type="checkbox"/> Platform silent on issue. McCain: “opposes employer mandates.”<input type="checkbox"/> Platform silent on issue. McCain has announced opposition to



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passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act to reverse Roberts' Supreme Court decision on sex discrimination in wages. Obama/Biden voted for Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

- ❑ Platform supports increasing the minimum wage and providing an annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). Obama/Biden support COLA and voted to increase minimum wage.

WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

- ❑ Platform supports investing in “women owned small businesses and [removing] the capital gains tax on start-up small businesses.” Obama supports 5% side aside program in federal contracts for women passed in 2004 by Congress.
- ❑ Platform and Obama/Biden supports affirmative action in public contracting for women-owned and minority-owned businesses.

HEALTH CARE

- ❑ “Strongly and unequivocally supports *Roe v. Wade* and a woman’s right to choose a safe and legal abortion.” Obama has a 100% voting record from NARAL and PPFA.
- ❑ “Strongly supports access to comprehensive affordable family planning services” and comprehensive “age-appropriate sex education.” Obama/Biden voted for funding family planning.

Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and is not co-sponsoring other equal pay for equal work legislation. Said women did not need more legislation, but need “more education and training.”

- ❑ Platform is silent on increasing minimum wage. McCain voted against raising minimum wage repeatedly (19 times), but finally voted yes in 2007. Yet he did not vote for a “clean” minimum wage act; only voted to raise minimum wage when the final bill included tax breaks for businesses.

WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

- ❑ Platform silent on women-owned businesses. Bush refused to implement 5% side aside program for women owned businesses and cut funding of the Small Business Administration. McCain’s small business planks make no mention of programs for women-owned businesses.
- ❑ Platform opposes affirmative action. McCain backs an initiative which would ban affirmative action for women and people of color in public education, public contracting (for women-owned businesses), and public employment on the 2008 Arizona ballot. He calls affirmative action “quotas.”

HEALTH CARE

- ❑ Opposes *Roe v. Wade*. Supports banning legal abortion. McCain voting record: zero rating from PPFA and NARAL. Palin opposes legal abortion even in cases of rape and incest.
- ❑ Supports “increased funding for abstinence [only] education” and opposes school-based clinics that provide referrals or counseling in abortion or family planning. McCain even “opposed legislation that abstinence-only education be medically accurate and scientifically based.” McCain has voted repeatedly against family planning funding.



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- Pledges to “repeal Global Gag Rule” which denies international family planning aid to any family planning program in developing nations that uses its own money to counsel on, make referrals for, or try to change laws to permit legal abortion.
- Obama/Biden co-sponsored a bill to end insurance discrimination that excludes coverage for contraception, but covers erectile dysfunction medication.
- Platform pledges to fund the United Nations Population Fund that provides family planning services and maternal health care.
- Platform supports State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) which covers 6 million uninsured children. Obama/Biden voted for the SCHIP reauthorization, which expanded coverage of the act to include an additional 3.8 million children. Bush vetoed the bill.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- Platform supports Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which provides federal funding for programs for programs to reduce violence against women, a national VAWA hotline, and funding for shelters for domestic violence survivors. Biden authored and championed VAWA. Obama supports funding, co-sponsored reauthorization.
- Platform supports strengthening programs that support survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Platform pledges to address labor and sex trafficking through legislation, enforcement, and addressing the root causes of trafficking.

- Platform strongly supports the global gag rule, which Bush installed his first day in office. In 2005, McCain voted NO on legislation to overturn the “Global Gag Rule.”
- McCain has ducked questions on this contraceptive insurance discrimination as recently as July, 2008.
- Platform silent on issue. Bush Administration has held up funding authorized by Congress for 7 years, amounting to \$235 million withheld.
- Platform opposes – McCain voted against SCHIP reauthorization in 2007. Rated worst Senator by Children’s Defense Fund Action Council with a 10% rating in 2007. Supported Bush veto of SCHIP.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- Platform silent on issue. McCain voted against funding VAWA.
- Platform states faith-based organizations have a greater degree of success than others dealing with domestic violence.
- Platform pledges to establish a human trafficking task force, to increase diplomatic relations, and to publicize offenders’ identities.



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EDUCATION

- Platform recommits to enforcing Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination in federally funded education programs.
- Platform seeks to provide all children with access to “quality, affordable early childhood education.” Obama voted to expand child and dependent care tax subsidies.
- Platform supports the creation of an “American Opportunity Tax Credit to ensure that the first \$4000 of college is completely free for most Americans” in exchange for public service. Obama voted to expand PELL grants.

HUMAN RIGHTS

- Obama/Biden voted against confirming Roberts and Alito and voted to sustain filibuster against Alito. Biden voted against confirming Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court.
- Platform and Obama/Biden support Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).
- Supports ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Biden held first hearings on CEDAW and Obama/Biden support ratification.
- Supports affirmative action for women and people of color in public education, public contracting, and public employment.
- Platform opposes “the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and all

EDUCATION

- Platform silent on Title IX. Supports public schools and/or classes for “boys only or for girls only”, which continues current Bush Title IX regulations that weaken Title IX.
- Platform supports improvement of early childhood education programs for low-income families. McCain has repeatedly voted against funding for child care programs.
- McCain has repeatedly voted against funding and other efforts such as reducing student loan interest rates to make college more affordable.

HUMAN RIGHTS

- McCain supports appointment of more judges like Roberts, Alito, Scalia, and Thomas who oppose women’s rights and would reverse *Roe v. Wade* and gut Title IX (educational rights) and Title VII (employee rights) that protect women against discrimination in education and employment.
- Dropped ERA from the platform.
- Unequivocally rejects ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- Opposes affirmative action. (See above.)
- Strongly supports the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and



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attempts to use [same-sex marriage] to divide us.” Obama would repeal DOMA and oppose a Federal Marriage Amendment.

- Platform supports “the repeal of ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ and the implementation of policies to allow qualified men and women to serve openly regardless of sexual orientation.” Obama would repeal policy.

IRAQ WAR

- Obama opposed Iraq war from the beginning. Supports withdrawing troops responsibly from Iraq with a 16 month timeline by the summer of 2010. “Fighting a war without and will not force the Iraqis to take the responsibility for their own future....will not make the American people safer.”

calls for a constitutional amendment to define marriage as between a man and a woman. McCain voted for DOMA, but voted against the Federal Marriage Amendment. Says states should decide marriage policies.

- Platform affirms “incompatibility of homosexuality with military service.” McCain says “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is working.

IRAQ WAR

- McCain supported the war from the beginning. “When Iraqi forces can safeguard their own country, American troops can return home.” This could last years and years... even one hundred years.